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# Possible Direct Action By U.S. In Middle East Crisis Hinted <sup>22</sup>

WASHINGTON — (INS) — Some U.S. officials seriously considered today the possibility that America may have to take direct action to avert war and disaster in the Middle East. These officials believe that Western honor and influence are being gravely challenged.

They said that if by aggression either Israel or the Arab states lose territory to the other, the reputation and influence of Britain, France and the U. S. will be sorely hurt all over the world.

It was against this background that assistant Secretary of State George V. Allen said publicly Sunday that "if Israel is attacked, we will do everything to protect it, and we would do the same for the Arab states."

No officials have yet spelled out what direct action might be taken if the worst comes to the worst.

Officially there have been repeated statements of hope that Egypt and Israel will accept the new United Nations truce plan.

But privately some officials believe the U. S. might be forced to take some dramatic action to "sanitize" the situation through physical intervention in one form or another. This is still in the talking stage.

The entrance of the Communists into the Middle East picture through the sale to Egypt of 75 to 100 million dollars worth of arms sharpened the challenge to the West.

Broken down into simple terms the situation is this:

1. In 1950 it was felt there was danger that Israel might attack the Arab states. As a warning to Israel and assurance to the Arabs, the three western powers declared it was their policy to prevent either side from capturing territory from the other.

2. Since then, the three western powers have put curbs on their own arms shipments to the Middle East to try to make it impossible for either side to get enough power to conquer the other.

3. The sale of communist arms to Egypt, including jet fighter planes and submarines, has threatened to wreck western efforts to maintain an arms balance.

4. The West has declared it will not enter an arms race in the Middle East. It is doubtful whether the West has enough surplus war planes and guns to match the Communists in a plane-for-plane and gun-for-gun arms race.

The Communists are dealing in surplus and have plenty to deal with. Director Allen Dulles of the Central Intelligence Agency estimated Russia has between four and six thousand MIG-15 jet fighters, many of which he said, could be written off as "surplus" for deals like the one with Egypt.